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**To:** Microsoft ATR  
**Date:** 11/17/01 1:50pm  
**Subject:** Microsoft Settlement

As an older adult (72), I have several points of interest in the future of Microsoft. 1) the local economy, 2) shareholders, 3) free enterprise, 4) competition.

1) A business as large as Microsoft, like Boeing, is not self-dependent, in that it uses the services of many attendant businesses. Therefore I believe that the whiplash of this action will either reduce or eliminate many related businesses.

2) Throughout the U.S. people have invested in Microsoft as part of their retirement, not to receive dividends (of which there have been none), but to be a part of the excitement of a rapidly growing industry. Many have seen their portfolios reduced by half since the government's action.

3) We have grown up in what is probably the fastest growth of industry ever seen. We have many improvements in our lives because of the freedom of individuals like Hewlett and Packard, Gates and Allen, Bill Boeing...the list goes on. Had these innovators not had the freedom to develop their ideas, none of their competition could have started, much less thrived as their competitors. True, many have dropped out, but not because they were stopped by the originators, but because they really didn't "build a better mousetrap."

4) No one that I know of has the capability of eliminating competition in the American market. The government is often misguided by lobbyists who would have us believe differently, but all of my life I have heard of people who developed an engine which wasn't gas dependent, in competition with the auto makers. If people knew of this and really wanted it, I don't think anything would have stopped it. Competition is a valuable and healthy way to do business. Improvement often follows.

Thank you for your time in reading my comments. Dollie W. Latimer